

Desert Tortoise Diet

Best Foods are Native Plants including

Hoary Abutilon (*Abutilon spp.*)
Arizona Cottontop Grass (*Digitaria spp.*)
Bamboo Muhly Grass (*Muhlenbergia dumosa*)
Blue Gramma Grass (*Bouteloua gracilis*)
Buckwheat (*Eriogonum spp.*)
Cassia (*Senna spp.*)
Curly Mesquite (*Hilaria belangeri*)
Deer Grass (*Muhlenbergia rigens*)
Desert Honeysuckle (*Anisacanthus thurberi*)
Desert Senna (*Cassia covesii*)
Desert Willow (*Chilopsis linearis*)
Evening Primrose (*Oenothera spp.*) (j)
Fern Acacia (*Acacia angustissima*)
Globe Mallow, other mallows (*Sphaeralcea spp.*) (j)
Morning Glory (Convolvulaceae)
Plantain (*Plantago spp.*) (j)
Prickly Pear (fruit and pads)
Rock Hibiscus (flowers and leaves) (*Hibiscus denudatus*)
Spurge (*Euphorbia spp.*) (j)
Trailing 4 o'clock (*Allionia incarnata*)
Vine Mesquite (*Panicum obtusum*)

Other Healthy Foods

Alfalfa (fresh or hay)
Bermuda Grass (fresh or hay)
Bluegrass Lawn
Cantaloupe Leaves
Clover (j)
Dandelion Greens
Grape Leaves and Shoots
Mulberry Leaves (j)
Pumpkin Leaves (j)
Rose Petals (j)
Watercress
Zucchini / Squash Leaves

Acceptable Produce

Barley
Bean Sprouts (Mung)
Beet Greens
Bok Choy
Broccoli
Carrot Greens
Cilantro
Collard Greens
Endive
Kale
Mustard Greens
Parsley
Stringbeans
Snow peas
Okra
Spinach
Turnip Greens

Avoid the Following

All Types of Lettuce
Avocado
All Fruits
Cabbage
Celery
Cucumber
Any protein-rich foods
Canned and Frozen vegetables
Starchy Vegetables (including corn)

Important Diet Information

Native Plants: Commercial produce is, in general, less nutritious than native plants for tortoises due to higher water and lower fiber content.

Variety: In the wild, tortoises eat many different plants. Provide a variety of foods to meet your tortoise's nutritional needs.

Sodium: Do not feed tortoises sodium-rich foods including canned and frozen vegetables, dairy products, breads, and celery.

No Cat Food or Dog Food: They may cause digestive problems because the fiber content is too low for tortoises. The excess protein can accelerate growth, causing shell deformities and possible death.

Avoid fruit, starchy vegetables and corn: Tortoises have beneficial bacteria in their intestines. Too much sugar and starch disrupts digestion by changing the type of bacteria that live in the tortoises' hindgut.

(j)= good food for juvenile tortoise